

Child in home injuries

Each year almost more than 2,200 children die from injuries that happen at home. Nine million children are seen in emergency departments for unintentional injuries related to falls, hits, cuts, burns, poisonings, near-suffocations and near-drownings that occurred both at home and elsewhere.

Home injury deaths are caused primarily by airway obstruction, fire, burns, drowning, firearms, falls, choking, and poisoning.

Young children are at the greatest risk from unintentional injuries in the home because it is where they spend the majority of their time.

Most childhood home injuries occur in the kitchen, and typically result from burns, poisons, and falls.

Burns

Burns are one of the most harmful injuries a person can live through. In 2013, about 334 children died due to fire and burn-related injuries.

Children ages 4 and under are more susceptible to burn-related deaths.

- ✓ Always turn pot handles inward. Cooking pot handles extending outward from the stove can result in a scalding burn if a child reaches for it.
- ✓ Always keep cords up on the counter out of sight. Appliance cords hanging off a counter can result in a coffeepot spilling on a child.
- ✓ Do not handle hot liquids while holding a child or with a child at your feet. An adult with a hot beverage can burn a child if bumped suddenly.

Children should always be supervised when cooking.

- ✓ Keep matches and lighters out of your child's reach.
- ✓ Set your water heater thermostat to a maximum of 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Decreasing your water heater temperature can help prevent hot water scalds throughout your home.
- ✓ Working smoke alarms reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by half. Check your smoke alarm batteries every 6 months.

Poisons

Poison centers answer more than 1 million calls a year about a child under 5. In 2013, poison centers answered 2,590 calls about carbon monoxide exposure in children ages 12 and under.

- ✓ Keep poisons, medications, and household cleaners out of your child's reach or install safety latches. The cabinet under the kitchen sink is a very attractive place for a toddler to explore.
- ✓ Never store poisons or cleaners in food or beverage containers.
- ✓ Never assume children cannot open childproof containers.
- ✓ Keep all medicines and potentially poisonous products in their original packaging.
- ✓ Keep poisonous plants, like the common philodendron, out of reach. Biting on a leaf can cause swelling of the tongue and throat, resulting in an obstruction of the airway.
- ✓ Store and dispose button batteries carefully. The Poison Control Center reported that 2,836 children ages 19 and under were poisoned when

they swallowed button batteries in 2012.

- ✓ Check for and remediate lead in homes built before 1978.
- ✓ Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 if you think your child may have come in contact with something poisonous.
- ✓ Install carbon monoxide detectors on every level of the home, especially near sleeping areas

Falls

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 18,900 children ages 9 and under were seen in emergency departments each year for injuries caused by TV, furniture and appliance tip overs. It's important to secure TVs by mounting them to the wall or placing them on a low stable piece of furniture and to use brackets, braces or wall straps to secure top-heavy or unstable pieces of furniture. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an average eight children ages 5 and under die each year as a result of falling out of windows.

- ✓ Use safety straps to secure your child in highchairs and carrying seats. It only takes a few seconds for a child to stand up in a highchair or tip out of an infant seat.
- ✓ Keep infants and toddlers away from staircases. Use gates at the top and bottom of all stairways and add hooks to basement doors.

- ✓ Do not leave your child unattended in an infant walker. Many children are injured when they tumble down the stairs in walkers.

- ✓ Place furniture and cribs/beds away from windows.

- ✓ Use window guards on windows with emergency releases in case of fire.

- ✓ Install 9-12 inches of mulch, pea gravel, or rubber under playground equipment.

- ✓ Use approved safety gates on stairs and attach them to the wall if possible.

Many falls can cause concussions. A concussion occurs after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. While concussions are not usually fatal, their effects can be serious and in rare cases blood clots can form.

You should know the warning signs of potentially more serious concussions and contact your health care professional immediately.

- ✓ Headache that gets worse and does not go away.
- ✓ Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination.
- ✓ Repeated vomiting or nausea.
- ✓ Slurred speech.
- ✓ Will not stop crying and cannot be consoled.
- ✓ Will not nurse or eat.

Drownings

Drownings are the leading cause of injury death for young children ages 1 to 4. In 2013, 249 children ages 5 and under drowned at home and elsewhere in swimming pool, 91 children in natural water and 53 children in bathtubs.

There are many items in your home, other than a bathtub, that you may not think about that can become a drowning hazard such as fountains, buckets, or even the toilet.

- ✓ Enclose pools with a four-sided isolation fence with self-closing and self-latching gates. Life jackets can be used in pools for younger or weaker swimmers for added caution.
- ✓ Never leave a child unattended in the bathtub or near water.
- ✓ Learn life savings skills such as CPR.
- ✓ Turn buckets and inflatable children's pools upside-down when you are done using them to help prevent water from collecting and creating a potential hazard.

Suffocation & choking

Suffocation is the number one cause of death in children under 14 years old. 979 infants under age 1 suffocated or strangled in bed in 2013.

- ✓ Supervise children when they are eating and playing.
- ✓ Check toys to see if they pose a choking hazard. If something can fit through a toilet paper tube, it can cause a young child to choke.

- ✓ Keep coins, latex balloons, and hard candies out of reach and sight of children.
- ✓ Remove pillows, blankets and stuffed animals from a baby's sleeping area.
- ✓ Place children in bed on their backs.
- ✓ Do not allow babies to sleep on soft surfaces such as couches, chairs, or regular beds.
- ✓ Avoid feeding your baby small, hard, or round foods like grapes, hot dogs, or peanuts.
- ✓ Have children sit down while eating.
- ✓ Clip the loops on window cords up high and out of a child's reach.

Paper shredders

Young children can fit their fingers in small, seemingly impossible places, such as a paper shredder.

- ✓ Place the paper shredder in an area less accessible to children.
- ✓ Unplug the paper shredder from electrical source when not in use.
- ✓ Never allow children to operate a paper shredder, even with adult supervision. Injuries can still occur.

For more information or to file a complaint, visit our website or contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection.

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(Statistics quoted are nationwide and were compiled 02/15 by SAFE KIDS WORLDWIDE)

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